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A VISIT TO ST. MARY'S HOME.

THERE are spots in the sun. There are dreary spots in and about Manchester. Perhaps the most dreary of all such spots is the district between Ardwick and Belle Vue Prison. With these three truisms we commence our sketch. It is as well the reader should know the worst at once. We are going to take him to this most dreary of all dreary spots in our local sun. We are bound for a walk along the Hyde Road. Hyde Road is like Milton's description of Sin. It begins pretty well, and ends very badly. When we say "ends," we mean so far as our present walk is concerned. What becomes of the road afterwards, we know not, nor care to know. It may improve. Let us hope so! There is plenty of need.

And yet its respectable beginning is more dreary than the waste, howling wilderness through which it afterwards passes. Those great quaint mansions, built in Ardwick's palmy days, are melancholy beyond expression. Large, roomy, substantial,—worth, each of them, a dozen of the gim-cracky villas, all gable and plaster, which are being run up, and eagerly filled, in the fashionable suburbs of the present day,—these relics of a past age, these victims of human fickleness, appeal to our sympathies, nor appeal in vain. Transplanted to Whalley Range or Kersal, what fabulous rents would they not command! As it is—we shudder, and pass on.

Rows of houses more suited to the wants and pockets of the population, but with either a damp freshness or premature seediness about them;—a new and handsome, although steeple-less, church;—the loftiest of all lofty chapels belonging to that *long* sect "The United Methodist Free Church;"—the timber-yard of Mr. John Marsland Bennett, the late would-be Conservative Member for Manchester, but now, if report speaks true, converted to Liberalism by the Conservative Association;—a wee, tiny house, curiously overlaid with oyster-shells;—the railway-arch which marks the spot where our real "Manchester martyr" (*vide* Fenian speeches in Ireland and elsewhere) stood steady at his post, and died;—a toll-bar;—more houses, more painfully seedy or more painfully new than before; then the prison, looming in front, as the fitting centre for all the surrounding blight and desolation;—and a few hundred yards on this side of the prison we arrive at the end and object of our walk.

It is a house with a garden before it. Situated in such a locality, the house ought to be dirty, dreary, and decayed. It is. Likewise the garden, to be in keeping, should look as though it had been visited by an army of locusts, followed by a shower of soot and cinders. So it does. House and garden are shut out from the road by a wooden fence, in woful need of paint. On a small door in this fence is printed, in nearly illegible letters, "St. Mary's Home." The same title appears, also, on the portico in front of the building. We call it "portico," for want, not of a better, but of a worse word. It is the only attempt at ornament which the building possesses—and such an attempt! When we add that the front of the building is plastered, and has, many years ago, been white; that there are two or three steps to the front-door; and that, standing with our back to the front-door, under the "portico" aforesaid, we get a beautiful view of waste land, with the locomotive station and spires of Longsight beyond;—we have said all that need, or can, be said about the exterior of St. Mary's Home.

Perhaps, while waiting for the door to be opened, it may be well to state what has brought us to such an uninviting spot. St. Mary's Home has a second title: it is the "Church House of Refuge for fallen women in Manchester." The very name is enough. It implies a fight with the worst social evil of our day, an attempt to *cure* what no power on earth seems able to *prevent*. This dirty, poverty-stricken house rises in our estimation to the grandeur of the largest public institution which ever adorned a city, or won the admiration and money of good citizens. We honour its very shabbiness, we respect its very want of outward respectability. Wise men propound elaborate schemes, which look well on paper; preachers grow eloquent about "our fallen sisters;" congregations weep, and drop their threepenny-bits into the plate; society, generally, shrugs its shoulders and "passes by on the other side,"—while a great portion of our female world goes headlong to the devil. Elaborate schemes, and mock sympathy, and threepenny-bits, all stop short long before this part of Hyde Road. We are on the threshold of real, active, honest, unromantic work; and we take off our hat as we enter with a greater feeling of veneration, we are afraid, than we have sometimes experienced on entering a building professedly sacred.

A lobby adorned only with a collecting box; a door in front, and one on each side. We are ushered into a room on the left. It is tastefully furnished. There are knick-nacks on the table, engravings of various churches on the walls. We wait for a few minutes, and then enters the Lady Superior,—we scarcely know by what title to designate her—the presiding genius of the establishment—the most thoroughly practical, matter-of-fact, business-like lady we have ever had the good fortune to encounter. She will forgive us for what sounds like broad flattery, but *is* simple truth. Quick, energetic, and resolute, she is readable at a glance; a woman born to manage, and certain to manage well. We are friends directly. "Come to see the house?" We are "very welcome." A few moment's rest, and then we shall see it from top to bottom. We do.

Beginning at the foundation, we descend to the cellars, and are shown into the laundry, hung round with twenty surplices or more. "We wash for the Cathedral, and several other churches," our guide explains. Thence, ascending again to the ground-floor, we enter the kitchen,—clean to a degree; every pot and pan scoured and bright as a mirror. "The cook is a penitent," we are told, in passing. All the work of the Home is done by the penitents. There is only one paid servant,—the nice, modest-looking girl who admitted us,—and she, we learn to our astonishment, was formerly a penitent herself. One good result of the work at any rate. There are three other rooms on this floor,—the one we first entered, a larger one on the other side of the lobby, called the Board-room, and a small one opposite the kitchen, where the penitents have their meals. We use the term "penitents" as most natural, but it was curious and pleasant to notice that our guide often spoke of them as "the children." Truly the idea of home is carried out with marvellous minuteness!

On the first floor we are vouchsafed a passing glance into two front bedrooms allotted to the "ladies"—note the word carefully. Our guide has three lady helpers at present. "Two of us have each a penitent in her chamber." She explains:—"We are so pressed for room" At the back we are shown into the chapel—a little room where service is held every Sunday by one of the clergymen who act as chaplains. It is fitted up with prayer-desk, lectern, harmonium, and sundry benches. On the walls are hung some religious prints. Alas, here, as in other rooms, there is something else on the walls—discoloured paper, telling of damp, and that in no small degree. "We are just

over a drain," remarks our guide, "and sometimes, in summer, the smell is very bad indeed. We do so want another and better house, but it is no use wishing for what we can't get—is it?" and she dismisses the subject and takes us higher still.

Ah, now we begin to understand why the ladies are obliged to accommodate one or two of the penitents in their own bedrooms. We are taken into two rooms. In one are six beds, in the other four. Each bed is partitioned off in a seperate compartment by itself. The reader will best understand the arrangement if we say that each room is divided into pens about seven feet high, each pen containing a bed, washing apparatus, &c., all very compact, and like everything else about the house which *can* be made to look clean, cleanly beyond all cleanliness, but terribly suggestive of want of room. "We have two more inmates now in the home than we can properly accommodate," says our guide, "and we are constantly refusing admittance to the poor things who come to us." Being curious on this point, we ask for statistics. "We were obliged to refuse 40 last year, and 32 the year before," is the reply. Think, oh good Manchester churchmen and Christians, 72 poor creatures sent back to the cruel streets within two years! And this for want of a few crumbs from a few well-stocked tables—a little of that generosity which can bestow hundreds on big, high-sounding charities, surely might do something for poor little struggling St. Mary's Home!

Much might we say concerning what we saw and heard during our visit. Especially might we express our unfeigned admiration for the self-denying heroism with which our guide and her three companions have devoted themselves to such a laborious, painful, and, we had almost said, thankless task. We know that, at any rate, they have earned the blessings of a goodly company, who already, during the three years that the Home has been in existence, have been snatched from worse than death by the instrumentality of these noble workers in God's vineyard. Their daily work is marvellous, and though they made no complaint, it seemed to us that the greatest of their many wants was a little more sympathy and aid from our Manchester ladies. From whom should they more naturally look for both?

SMOKE AND DISEASE IN SALFORD.

Mr. Barningham, of the Pendleton Iron Works, has withdrawn his appeal to the Queen's Bench against the decision of the magistrates in favour of the Salford Corporation regarding the consumption of smoke. It appears, from evidence given in Court, that already the smoke nuisance at these works has been considerably abated. What, therefore, becomes of the opinion of half of the Salford Town Council, minus one, that the proceedings against the Pendleton Iron Works should be abandoned, as the prevention of smoke would involve an outlay which would virtually stop the works? Whilst on this subject we should like to draw the attention of the authorities to another source of disease which proceeds from beneath. The foundations of several streets of houses in Salford and Lower Broughton consist of nothing more than refuse, which has been carted there, previous to building, with a view of raising the level of the ground. Within the last few months a large field between Hough-lane and the Suspension Bridge, which was under water during the flood of 1866, has been covered with hundreds of cart-loads of refuse and rubbish. As it at present stands, the land is totally unfit to be built upon; but houses are springing up fast, and appear to be occupied as soon as built.

THE MANCHESTER BANKS.

The three Manchester Joint Stock Banks, whose shares the Stock Exchange ceased to quote in the official list a short time since, have settled their differences with that establishment, and the shares have been quoted this week as usual.

READING FOR THE BAR.

Now, listen, every dunderhead
  Throughout the English nation;
(Which is, I think, when all is said,
  A sweeping invocation.)

I'll tell you how to get a name,
  And also a position;
And but a penny do I claim
  By way of a commission.

I know you've nothing in your skull:
  No matter—do not stock it:
Your cashbox of bank-notes is full—
  You'd better just unlock it.

Pay one of England's Inns of Court
  A hundred pounds and forty—
Security for future port—
  And 'gainst your being naughty.

A hundred pay some legal star,
  Yclept a special pleader;
Say how d'y do—and there you are:
  You're for the Bar a Reader!

Why start so? But a phrase it is;
  It frightens only ninnies:
So, up, sir, with your fallen phiz,
  And down, sir, with your guineas.

Don't look more foolish than before;
  From terror's trance awaken:
I didn't think you *could* look more:
  I find I was mistaken.

Yours is not sorrow's bitter cup,
  Care's black-draught, or thought's blue-pill:
You are, in short, a pleader's pup—
  In long, a counsel's pupil.

You'll only have to live like me
  To calm your apprehension;
What I've to do, say, hear, and see,
  I may as well just mention.

In this wise we does fortune use:
  Six mornings out of seven,
I go to chambers—if I choose—
  Not *sooner* than eleven.

I skim—that's if I feel inclined—
  Some brief, that's easy, reading;
I draw—that's if I have a mind—
  A sheet or two of pleading.

I chatter with each fellow-pup:
  We nickname all the judges,
And take their sage decisions up
  With pishes, pshaws, and fudges.

We at our coach's foibles scoff,
  As pantomimes at bobbies;
We take his little crotchets off,
  And ride his little hobbies.

I read the Law Reports, or say
  The *Times*—if I prefer it;
And take the stump of Shanks away,
  Just when I like to stir it.

I dine, too, at my Inn of Court,
  Four times a year and twenty;
And if I get but little port,
  I, of its sort, get plenty.

Then home I go; and when I'm there,
I'm bound by Hobson's fetter
To either work or play—whiche'er
I chance to like the better.

Nine months this sort of thing goes on,
And then I sheath my sabre;
Another three are spent and gone
In resting from my labour.

The next two years I've nought to do
But eight and forty dinners;
And then I'm "called," and feed a few
Inebriated sinners.

I contemplate my wig and gown
In every passing-by glass;
I start a very learned frown,
And mount a double eye-glass.

I shave my nascent whiskers off:
They made me look so young:
I'm careful, while I sagely cough,
To hold my learned tongue.

Whatever topic they may broach,
My friends, who used to snub me,
Defer to me, when I approach,
And by my title dub me.

Then, enter, dunderheaded host,
While you the Bar will let in;
The class which men esteem the most
The biggest fool can get in.

Of all the crazy, crackbrained crams
That in this world there are,
The craziest, crackbrainedest flam
Is Reading for the Bar.

LADIES ON THE LECTURES TO LADIES.

[We have been honoured with a somewhat embarrassing number of letters from fair correspondents, commenting on our last week's article, "The Lectures to Ladies at the Royal Institution." Their spirit is, in every instance, admirable. We regret we can only find room for two.]

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.]

SIR,—It is a trite saying, but one founded on fact, that "woman is what man has made her." It seems also to be a fact that man, at the present moment, is not satisfied with the result of his "making," though he avoids acknowledging his responsibility, except by inference, when he suggests plans for our improvement. One of these plans was honoured by your notice on Saturday. So much good-nature and kindly feeling were apparent through the banter of the article that I venture to address you, and ask you to consider if you are right in satirizing such an experiment? Do not suppose from this that we consider the plan in question the best, either for producing female Newtons or Whewells (if that were the object), or for forming the mind of the model woman about whom so much is said just now. Some of us are of opinion that Greek plays, their authors and heroes, were not the most important subjects to introduce to us. Others think that time would be better spent in helping us to realise the grand laws that our modern philosophers have discovered, than in explaining to us the clever but mistaken guesses of the ancients. But it is good to have *something* beyond our every-day life presented to our minds, and we feel greatly indebted to the gentlemen who take so much trouble to provide it, thankfully accepting what they have to offer. The undesirable state of things which, we are ready to acknowledge, exists, is the result of long training; unconscious on the part of our trainers, perhaps, but no less certainly the effect of their long-continued influence upon us. The cure, therefore, cannot be speedy, especially if the disease be radically attacked and not merely its symptoms repressed. Mr. Aldis has taught us (in addition to what he could make us understand of the Metonic Cycle and Eccentrics) that man has had to *grope* his way to knowledge; that early investigators of the laws of the universe were obliged to guess and experiment, abandon and try again, before finding the correct theory. We fancy on this new ground the same experience must be gone through. Not all who undertake to instruct us know what we require or how to give it to us. Some of our teachers have yet to learn the points that a woman's intellect would most readily grasp and those wherein would be her difficulties; but if teachers and pupils agree to persevere they will surely, in the end, find the means of attaining their object. Only let *them have fair play*. Mr. Smart in his introductory lectures urged upon our attention that *there is nothing* trivial, and if, at the end of the course, we shall have carried away only this lesson into the routine of our daily duties, we shall have learned something worth attending the Royal Institution lectures to gain.—I am, Sir, with due respect,

ONE OF THE AUDIENCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.]

SIR,—In last Saturday's *Sphinx* you gave some account of the Lectures to Ladies, delivered at the Royal Institution, as viewed from the standpoint of a cynical, faultless onlooker. With your permission I should like to say a word or two on the other side, and to examine the subject as it is regarded by the ladies themselves, premising that I am only one of those silly, brainless creatures, a Girl ("of the Period" if you like), fond of dancing, dress, musical promenades at the "Botanical," and—low be it spoken—not averse even to a little flirtation. Further, though not included in the "all" wearing spectacles, I regularly attend Mr. Aldis's lectures, as I did those previously given by Mr. Kennedy, on Ancient Greece. So I consider myself equally qualified with your young lady friend to give some information respecting the lectures.

"Fancy," you say, "being asked by our fair partner, during the intervals of a quadrille, whether we have seen Jupiter lately, or what our pet theory may be concerning the spots on the sun!" Let me ask if you would prefer your "fair partner" to consult you as to the probability of "fichus" being again worn round in the summer, or request the favour of your opinion on the respective merits of long skirts and short ones, Watteau loopings, or Camargo puffs? Of course, if messieurs our partners at a ball can rise to no higher flights, we must in pity suit our conversation to their limited capacity; or perhaps some of them aspire to rival Worth, the famous man-milliner and dressmaker in Paris. If so, we ladies shall feel delighted to favour them with a few hints on the subject of Fashion's Eccentricities as distinguished from the Moon's Eccentric. As to the young lady who had gained such an astonishing amount of knowledge from Mr. Aldis's second lecture, I have no doubt she is in the highest degree charming in her proper sphere, which is evidently *not* that of studying or attending scientific lectures. I happened to be present at the lecture, and can only account for her very original definition of an "eccentric" and "the Erection," by charitably concluding that, during the explanation, she was occupied in studying the dress of the assembled spectacle wearers. To such "students" the hint thrown out as to separate boxes might be useful if acted upon.

By way of moral, you tell us that *we* (*men*, I presume) "don't want female Newtons or Whewells; and if we did, it would take something more than a few lectures like the above to produce such phenomena. So much for what you *don't* want. Now for what you do. You want "parents and governesses who know how to train up girls to be good wives, housekeepers, and mothers." Further, you "want schools, or colleges, if you will, where young ladies may learn something else besides a smattering of French and Italian, a few showy pieces of music, a little drawing (carefully done for them by an obliging master), a scribbly, lady-like hand, and a passion for all that is heroic, sentimental, and sensational." I must confess my utter inability to understand this reasoning. As to the sneer about "female Newtons and Whewells," if we could get real ones, not pseudo, tinsel imitations, so much the better; I presume few would object to such a result of the lectures. But we quite agree that "to produce such phenomena," something more would be required. The object of these different courses of lectures is to supply girls who, having left school, too often

spend their time in yawning over sentimental novels, dressing, and gossiping, and such like, with some incentive to continued study. The lectures are merely a guide to reading, and their great aim is thoroughness. At the last, Mr. Aldis, complaining of the small number of papers sent in, said he had the greatest horror of degenerating into a mere popular lecturer. Then, you *do* want girls trained up to be good wives, housekeepers, and mothers! What does a man want in a wife? A mere pie-and-pudding-making animal, or a rational, intelligent companion, who, when he returns from the active duties of his business or profession, can entertain him with something besides the peccadilloes of servants, the supposed cheating of butcher and baker, or a voluble comparison of the relative merits of "gas-light green" or azure blue for her next new evening dress? A good wife should be one who can sympathise with her husband's pursuits, if he is an intellectual man, *not* by trying to rival him, or pedantically showing off her own knowledge—one who can take a broad and just view of her position and its responsibilities, with reference to her husband, her children, and herself. The more cultivated and intelligent every woman really is, just in that proportion will she recognise the true nobility and importance of a woman's proper sphere as wife and mother, and the necessity there is for attending to all home duties be they cooking or sewing on shirt buttons. It is only the superficially educated women, going in for blue spectacles and general strong-mindidness, who would try to undervalue the necessity of understanding housekeeping, and the art of rendering their homes comfortable and happy. No sympathy have I with those who, like Dr. Mary Walker and Miss Becker, try to unsex and degrade their sisters, thus bringing into contempt any efforts at real, honest self-improvement, such as I firmly believe these lectures to be. I can only, with respect to them, speak for myself, but feel sure I represent a large proportion of the students in most heartily thanking those who inaugurated the movement, for the boon they have conferred on many, apparently, thoughtless girls, in helping to rouse them to some higher sense of their responsibility, before God and man, for the right use of talents entrusted to their charge.

It does seem unfair to judge these lectures from any solitary type of students. The young lady to whom reference has been made would, if taught housekeeping, or sewing, in all probability evince the same amount of non-comprehension. She reminds me of some acquaintances who, on returning from a continental tour, were asked how they enjoyed themselves and what they liked best. The response being, "We enjoyed ourselves immensely, and each had a bottle of wine to dinner every day!" One cannot help moralising on this "bottle of wine." Just as it is possible to travel through the most lovely scenery without noticing anything save badly paved roads, or some slight physical discomfort, so might we read with Mr. Kennedy, of the poets, philosophers, or historians of ancient Greece (immortal influencers of the thought-world, before whose shrine we bow with loving, reverent worship) and yet remember only (like the young lady with her eccentric) that "some people think Homer was a real personage and some do not; that Æschylus wrote about Agammemnon, who was murdered in his bath, and all because he walked over a purple carpet to the palace (!); that Euripides said something about people wearing crowns of "ivy, oak, and flowering eglantine" (how would that suit with my white silk and green trimmings?); that Aristophanes—only fancy!—wrote about a sausage-seller; and that Socrates positively kept a shop,—but I don't quite understand that, for it was called a Meditation Shop—and what could he possibly sell?"

To such students (?) lectures, like those of which we have been speaking, not only can do no good, but may become a source of positive harm, leading them to think they know something, when in reality they are utterly ignorant. There must be numbers of girls who do not aspire to become "female Newtons or Whewells," and perfectly shrink from becoming women of the so-called strong-minded type, yet feel that, from rational creatures, something more is required than the ability to dance, dress, or flirt well (all very delightful by way of recreation), or even make pies and puddings. What are they to think when men, after laughing and sneering at girls for being wholly devoted to the perusal of sensational novels and *Le Follet*, affect to despise any efforts women may make to improve their minds by entering on some course of real, earnest study?

ANON.

MINNIE.

BY EDWIN WAUGH.

My Minnie's as shy as a little wild-rose,
That fills all around with delight as it blows;
Its leaves, pleasant-scented,
Unfolding, contented
To sweeten the nook where it grows.

Kate flutters her wings, and a lady would be;
She's ribboned, and jewelled, and flounced to the knee;
But she's keen, and she's cold,
And she's proud of her gold,—
The dule take her ribbons, for me!

My Minnie's as poor as the little red-breast,
"With nought in the wide world but God and its nest;"
But the star of a king
Is a pitiful thing
To the jewel that glows in her breast.

Kate's handsome and bold, and she's haughty and chill;
She's a winterly smile for the heart she can kill;
And she bears off the bell
From the girls of the dell,—
With a clapper that never lies still.

Though Minnie's as blithe as the skylark that springs
From its roost in the meadow, with dew on its wings,—
'Tis her own little nest,
And the mate she loves best,
That gladden the song that she sings.

What care I for riches, and gaudy array?
What care I to flaunt with the heartlessly-gay?
If my little wild-rose
Love me on to life's close,
And sweeten its troublesome way.

OUR STATUES.

THE amiable hero-worshippers who would not willingly let die the memory of remarkable or patriotic Englishmen are, naturally enough, apprehensive that even bronze and marble may be less durable than befits the virtues they would commemorate. Many good people, however, appear to be of opinion that the notable demerit of our public statues is, that they are sure to last longer than they deserve to do, and that the elements are not sufficiently discriminating. An educated atmosphere, they argue, would make short work of the metallic amalgam out of which so-called artists fabricate our monumental Wellingtons, and Peels, and Cobdens. These intolerant art critics insist that such statues, as we refer to, ought to have been treated by the public as the Spartans used to treat their feeble and least promising progeny, and have been mercifully strangled in the cradle. It must be admitted, however, that the "castings" in Piccadilly, St. Ann's Square, and Peel Park, whose complexion (thanks to the chimneys of our Barningham's) are very much of the hue of Ethiopian serenaders, are gratuitously hideous. They are very much uglier than they need to be.

Our public statues in white marble are not less unfortunate; but these, at any rate, have the loveliness of virgin purity to begin with. The "monumental alabaster" has all the beauty of new-born innocence when newly revealed to the public eye, and is as fair as a christening robe. The gloomier bronze suffers in public esteem from the natural depravity of the colour with which it enters the world. So that, after running the gauntlet of a thousand chimneys for half a dozen years, our sooty warriors and statesmen want sweeping, as the chimneys do. For our marble effigies we have the remedy of water. A judicious newspaper correspondent suggested, the other day, that the statue of the Prince Consort, in Albert Square, smoke-sullied as it was, in spite of protecting canopies and sheltering turrets and pinnacles, might be restored to its primitive whiteness by a friendly fire-engine. The sensible hint was taken. We do not know if the statue of Her Majesty, in Peel Park, has had to be sent to the wash in a similar way. We can well believe that

this has been rendered necessary by the unconsumed fuel of cheap iron-makers.

We were set thinking about our statues, and the comparative durability of bronze and marble, by a paragraph referring to the removal of the statue of Queen Anne, at Leeds. Persons who have visited Leeds will remember that at the top of its Market-street—Briggate—the statue in question was housed in a niche, surveying the traffic of that busy thoroughfare with the serenity common to monumental sculpture. The statue is of white marble, and the artist's name was Carpenter. The sovereign figure has been carried to the new Town Hall, where it will probably continue to look at the inhabitants of Leeds with its characteristic composure. They have in Leeds, as here, their smoky chimneys, which cannot be "effectually cured," for we are told of "the black covering which the statue has gradually received during its long exposure." The hero-worshippers will be glad to learn that marble is, unexpectedly, able to resist atmospheric assault. The statue of Queen Anne was presented to the Corporation of Leeds so long ago as the year 1713. There were loyal aldermen even in those days; so that the memorial in Albert Square, and the royal busts occupying the draperied niche in the entrance of our own Town Hall, are not entirely original manifestations of municipal regard. "Queen Anne" was the gift of a Mr. Alderman William Milner, whose loyalty, without doubt, has done something to rescue his name from "dull forgetfulness." The members of our excellent Corporation who would like to perpetuate their own respectable memories, and who have misgivings about doing it on their own intrinsic merits, may usefully take a leaf out of the book of the late Mr. Alderman William Milner. It is only fair to the memory of that long-departed Yorkshire man to say that his loyalty was appreciated by his colleagues. The following translation of the inscription on Queen Anne's statue is not ill-calculated to instruct the minds, and to inflame the loyalty of Mr. William Milner's compatriots, be they quick or the dead:—

Mark this elegant statue (superior even to that of St. Paul's, in London), piously consecrated to our most illustrious Queen Anne (though far surpassing every representation), and erected at the sole expense of William Milner, Knight, a prudent Justice of the Peace, a faithful subject, a noble citizen, and an opulent merchant.

What do we deduce from the foregoing? This: that, inasmuch as a white marble monument is more agreeable to look at than a blackamoor "casting," and that, as the good Queen Anne, after standing the wear and tear of 156 years, has just entered on a new reign, our public-spirited fellow-citizens, who contemplate statuary, will see that, for all practical purposes, the quarry is not more ephemeral than the furnace. We deduce further: that during the dominion of the many-headed Barningham, the marble we possess already must be confided to the tender care of the watchful and indefatigable Tozer.

WINTER SONG.

[FROM THE GERMAN OF EICHENDORFF.]

I dreamed that I was lying
Beside my father's door;
I saw in golden sunshine
The valley and the moor.
Warm breezes gently blowing
The buds of spring caressed;
And flakes of blossom trembled
Down on my head and breast.

I woke. The moonlight glimmered
Behind the dusky wood;
A stranger's land was round me,
And lonely there I stood.
The flakes that fell upon me
Dissolved in icy tears;
The land was white with winter,
My hair was white with years!

REMINISCENCES OF THE STAGE
IN MANCHESTER.
IV.—SIMS REEVES—MANAGER ROXBY.

THE Theatre Royal opened under Mr. Roxby's management, at Christmas, 1842, with the strongest company which it had possessed for years; and neither before nor since has there been collected together such an efficient corps as was attached to the establishment during the two seasons when it was under his control. This we say without reflection on, or disparagement to, individual performers who have been connected with the Manchester stage either before or since that time. The season opened with *As You Like It*, a play of which it has been said that if a company can perform it satisfactorily, in all its details, they are capable of playing almost anything within the range of the Drama. During the season a number of Shakespere's plays and old standard comedies were revived; and, although it was up-hill work at first, as the public were slow to believe that good entertainment could be provided without stars, the season was successful on the whole. At that time the terms of admission to the boxes and pit were four shillings and two shillings, respectively; and, as there was half-price at nine o'clock, Miss Woolgar and Roxby's rattling company of comedians seldom failed to draw a good attendance before the close of the evening. The company was particularly strong in actors, having two leading tragedians, S. Butler and Charles Pitt, from Covent Garden; three or four second tragedians, who are now in London and America; Bass and Davidge, representatives of first old men; the manager himself, an excellent eccentric actor and light comedian, who afterwards went to the Lyceum, with Charles Matthews, and ultimately to Drury Lane, where he died, a few years since; Munyard and Paul Bedford's nephew, Henry, as low comedians, both of whom went to the Adelphi, and died there, after a few seasons; and Mr. Donald King, the tenor singer. Besides Miss Woolgar, there were also several good actresses—amongst others, Mrs. Horsman and Miss M. Angel.

The second and last season of Roxby's management, and of the theatre in Fountain-street, opened with *The Tempest*, exceedingly well mounted, and with a most powerful cast. All the principal characters were well filled; and even the Neapolitan King, the Usurping Duke, and honest old Gonzalo, which are generally allotted to intelligent supers, were consigned to efficient actors, who have since established themselves on the London boards. The absence of Miss Woolgar was a great loss; but Mr. Roxby had judiciously strengthened his company in many other respects, bringing out, among other strangers, Miss Emmeline Montague, a very pleasing young actress, who became a great favourite, and subsequently married Mr. Compton, the popular comedian of the Haymarket.

Another memorable first appearance occurred on this occasion. Previous to the play the whole of the company appeared upon the stage, to sing the National Anthem. One of the solos was sung by a young man, of swarthy complexion and rather uncouth appearance. He was attired in that democratic costume which is supposed to constitute the evening dress of an English gentleman of the nineteenth century, and composes the ordinary garb of a day-waiter. Incidentally, we may remark of this costume that it occasionally causes awkward blunders. At an evening *rout*, a lady of our acquaintance requested a distinguished-looking gentleman to perform some trifling friendly office for her, as a fellow-guest. The imposing-looking gentleman meekly replied, "Please 'm, I'm Thomas," which rather abashed her ladyship; but she congratulated herself that it would have been worse had she mistaken one of the gentlemen present for a footman. But to return to our muttons and the National Anthem. The young man in the swallow-tailed coat

proceeded to emit from his chest such a prodigious volume of ringing sound that everybody stared at each other. Some shrugged their shoulders, some smiled: nobody knew what to make of it. The singer rose to such a height that he had great difficulty in coming down again, and was nearly furnishing another example of the familiar illustration of going up like a rocket, and coming down like the stick. Few who heard this somewhat nervous young vocalist, who had little more management over his voice than the Sphinx has over a whirlwind, had the slightest idea that he was to become the renowned tenor, the grand lyrical artist, the fervid oratorio declaimer of "Sound an alarm," "Thou shalt break them," and "Comfot ye, my People." Such, however, is the fact, and the young actor of the Manchester stock company, whose name appeared modestly in the bills throughout the season as Mr. J. Reeves, was none other than the legitimate successor of John Braham, and the greatest English tenor this century has produced—Sims Reeves! As Mr. Reeves was born at Woolwich, in the year of grace 1821, at the time of which we are writing he must only have been twenty-two years of age; but besides having performed at Edinburgh and other theatres, he had, two years previously, fulfilled an engagement as a subordinate singer and actor with Mr. Macready, at Drury Lane. Mr. Allen, the tenor, was at that time the leading singer in Macready's company, and Mr. Reeves derived great benefit from the advice and instruction of that excellent operatic artist. In fact, Mr. Reeves' apprenticeship at Drury Lane was of the greatest service to him both as a singer and actor. Macready was a manager who would stand no nonsense, and if a performer had nothing more to do than come upon the stage and inform Macbeth that Birnam Wood was approaching Dunsinane, he insisted upon the announcement being made to that usurping but funking tyrant in a proper manner, and woe betide the unfortunate wight who blundered. This careful supervision was no doubt of service to Mr. Reeves, who always showed dramatic capacity in the parts which he undertook. During the Manchester season, several operas were brought out in which he performed the principal tenor parts. He appeared in *Somnambula*, *Der Freischutz*, *The Secret Marriage*, *Artaxerxes*, and others. These operas were not particularly successful, most of the singers being young and inexperienced; but Mr. Reeves had many other parts allotted to him in which, even then, he became extremely popular, and had opportunities for showing that capacity for ballad singing for which he has since become so famous. Thus, in the operetta of *Love in a Village*, as Hawthorn, he sang "My rod and my gun" with great effect, and in *Guy Mannering*, *Rob Roy*, *Rosina*, *The Slave*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *The Waterman*, and *Black Eyed Susan*, he had musical parts allotted to him in which he sang such songs as "My love is like the red, red rose," Tom Bowline, The White Squall, "Farewell my trim built wherry," The Death of Nelson, and others with which his name has become identified. It was about this time that he began singing "My Pretty Jane," and considering that for the last twenty-five years he has been requesting her to overcome her shyness, and to meet him in the evening when the bloom is on the rye, we consider it high time that something resulted from the invitation. Perhaps that other young woman, Maud, whom he keeps inviting to come into the garden, after having said good bye, sweetheart, good bye, may interfere with Jane's arrangements. During Mr. Roxby's management nearly the whole of Shakspere's plays which are at all fitted for the stage were produced, and in these Mr. Reeves had many parts allotted to him. He had to sing many of the poet's exquisite songs, which he did with much taste and expression, for although at that time he had little command over his voice, he always sang with feeling. In the revivals which took place, Mr. Reeves had a perfect feast of these delicious songs wherewith to regale his hearers, among others, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind," and all Amien's songs in *As You Like It*, "Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more; men were deceivers ever," from *Much Ado about Nothing;* "Hark, hark the lark at heaven's gate sings," from *Cymbeline*, and the music of Hecate in *Macbeth*. All this was excellent practice for Mr. Reeves, who improved rapidly, and it was evident that, with perseverance and care, he would show eventually what he was capable of. At that time, no doubt, he felt conscious of power, and he certainly did not spare his voice, but tore away at his bravura songs in such a way that it is wonderful he has preserved it unimpaired so long. Like other artists, painters, poets and musicians, although he did not spare himself when in the humour, he was not always in that mood, but he did not allow it to interfere with his engagements. We have heard it said of him that if he was averse to singing when he did not feel up to the mark, on the other hand, when he was in the vein he had difficulty in restraining himself. Probably he experienced what Tennyson says—

> I do but sing because I must,
> And pipe but as the linnets sing.

We have heard it stated on excellent authority that, when Mr. Sims Reeves felt inclined to sing, he did so regardless of time and place. He has been known to awake in his bed at the dead of night, and at the witching hour, robed in full (midnight) canonicals, set to work exercising his voice in a way that startled, if it did not incommode, the other slumbering inmates of the establishment.

On the destruction of the old theatre, after a brief interval, Mr. Reeves performed for a season at the small bandbox of a theatre in Liverpool known as the Liver, and since pulled down. Here he made further progress, and, we believe, attracted the attention of Mr. John Parry, who prophesied that he would make a noise in the musical world some day. So rich an organ was not to be lost for want of cultivation, so Mr. Reeves went to Italy and got the best instruction that was to be obtained. The result was astonishing. In little over a year he returned and, under M. Julien's management of Covent Garden Theatre, he made his *dèbut* in London as Edgar in the *Bride of Lammermoor*, in which he created a perfect *furore*, and nearly drove the excitable Julien mad with joy at his success. Since that time Mr. Sims Reeves has never looked behind him. Latterly he has nearly abstained from opera singing, no doubt feeling constrained to husband his voice, and, although he has fulfilled several engagements at the Manchester Theatre since he established his reputation, he is now best known here as a great oratorio singer and popular ballad minstrel.

The eminence of Mr. Reeves has obliged us to devote so much space to him, that we must curtail our remarks concerning the other performers of Mr. Roxby's company, but before taking our final leave of the old theatre, a few lines are due to Mr. Samuel Butler, the tragedian. Mr. Butler was well known and respected in this city. He died in the year after the destruction of the theatre, and was buried in Ardwick Cemetery, where there is an epitaph on his tombstone written by his friend Mr. Charles Swain. Butler was a most intelligent actor, but was physically incapacitated from acting many parts for which he was mentally qualified. He stood several inches over six feet high, and, as his figure was gaunt and ungainly, although only a few years above forty, he looked much older, and no appliances of the stage could make him look young. Thus he never looked the character of Hamlet, which was his favourite part, and really was an intellectual study. Characters through which ran a vein of grim saturnine humour were his forte. His melancholy Jacques was a masterpiece, as were also his Penrudduck, in Cumberland's *Wheel of Fortune;* Richlieu the wily Cardinal; the

diabolical Iago, and Sir Pertinax Mac Sycophant, the "booing" Scotchman. Occasionally he liked to go out of his line and play such parts as Robert Tyke, in *The School of Reform*, and Luke the Labourer. His Tyke was a most forcible impersonation, and never failed to draw a large audience. On this subject he was somewhat touchy, and on one occasion, on a brother performer's having selected *The School of Reform* for his benefit, with Butler advertised as Tyke, he declined to play the part because he had not been formally asked to do so. He was a man of varied and extensive reading, and, being a fine elocutionist, he gave a series of readings at the Athenæum and elsewhere with great success, and was about the first to inaugurate this species of entertainment. He read in a plain unaffected way, discarding the abominable mouthings and gesticulations which some readers affect.

Mr. Roxby's second and most successful season was drawing to a close, and after a brilliant performance of *The Winter's Tale* and Dickins' *Christmas Carol*, on the following morning, in the month of May, the theatre was discovered to be on fire, and within a couple of hours there was not a vestige of it left but the bare and tottering walls. Thus terminated a brilliant season literally in a blaze of triumph, and, after a career of thirty-seven years, the old theatre in Fountain Street became a thing of the past.

OFFICIAL NEWS.

ECONOMY is now the order of the day in all the public departments. The Postmaster-General has given orders that the clerks in the establishment are upon no account to flirt any of the ink out of their pens after taking a dip and previous to their commencing writing.

All the red strings used for tying together the quills used in the public offices are to be carefully preserved, and all the red tape will be similarly dealt with.

Mr. Chambers, the Chancellor of the (Theatre Royal) Exchequer, has issued an order that all the orange peel found in the pit is to be preserved and converted into marmalade.

All the H's dropped upon the stage are to be picked up and forwarded to Mr. Hadfield, M.P., who has contracted for them on terms mutually advantageous to himself and the public.

The heavy fathers of the theatre have received orders to be less lavish with the purses and money bags which they carry about with them, and give away to their graceless nephews and wards with so much prodigality.

The time-honoured real leg of boiled mutton, which has hitherto been invariably served up hot in the farce of *No Song, no Supper*, is to be abolished, and a pasteboard substitute used instead.

The Right Hon. the President of the Board of Refreshments, not to be behindhand with his colleagues, has given orders that all the cheeseparings and heel-taps found in his department are to be preserved and utilised.

Sir F. Baraby, the Irish Secretary, has determined to dispense with all his superfluous brogue for the future Such an act of magnanimity deserves to be appreciated on this side of the—curtain.

The public cannot fail to have observed the praiseworthy economy of words by Mr. T. Morton during the run of the Pantomime. For the last two months he has confined himself to the use of the monosyllable "*Yaas*," repeated about ten times of an evening, much to the amusement of the audience.

One of the most important measures of economy has been in the curtailment of the skirts of the ladies of the ballet. Hopes were entertained, at one time, that they would be abolished altogether, but the Lord Chamberlain interfered, and no further cutting down will take place this session.

Every drain on the public expenditure will be curtailed as much as possible, but any one may still have a drain at the Right Hon. James Lea's, at his own expense.

Mr. W. Copeland, of Smithy-door Market, has been appointed Master of the Mint during the ensuing lamb season.

A MORNING AT ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH.

NEARLY a hundred and thirty years ago, when, according to the chronicles, Ardwick was a small outlying village, separated from Manchester by a mile of cultivated fields, a chapel was erected, and dedicated to St. Thomas. The land for the purpose was granted by Samuel Birch, Esquire, lord of the manor of Higher and Lower Ardwick, a descendant of that Matthew de Birch, of Birch, who, tradition says, was the faithful esquire in the crusade of Matthew de Hather sage, knight of Withington, who granted him land for the chapelry of Birch. Ardwick, at this time, was the favourite residence of the merchants and wealthy traders of the town of Manchester. The original chapel was of brick, with a turret and bell. From time to time it has been altered and enlarged, and, in late years, a campanile or bell-tower has been added; but the rude and simple design has remained unaltered. It is raised above the street, and has a graveyard, reached by steps. In its style, it evidently belongs to the dark ages of church architecture in Manchester. It is built of brick, with windows of the rudest and simplest ecclesiastical kind, and is unadorned, save with luxuriant ivy, which, through the years, has succeeded in covering it on the south side with a perennial mantle of glossy green. Entering the church, we find that the original simplicity, in a great measure, remains, with such touches of refinement as modern taste has from time to time suggested. The pews are open, and a chancel has been formed by screening off a raised portion of the nave with carved gothic screenwork, which scarcely accord with the other classical adornments. There are no stained windows, the light coming through monotonous, little leaded panes of glass, rendered opaque, and only relieved on one side of the church by the shadows of the straggling ivy-leaves which fringe them.

These old churches have many associations, historical and social, which lend an interest to them; and, as we sat in this one, we could not help casting our thoughts backward to the days in which it was built, and, in imagination, filling up the pews with those who once occupied them, but who have "now gone over to the majority," leaving their names in the graveyard outside, or on the marbles within. The church was built in the troublous times of the Jacobins, and some of its early worshippers met here when the Pretender was in hiding across the fields, in Ancoats Hall. After his proclamation in Manchester, as King James III., the residents of Ardwick may have watched the march of his army on its way to the south, and, a little later, its discomfited retreat through the town. Later still, they may have seen the heads of three of the officers of this army placed upon the Exchange. They were slow times, too, when a flying coach passed here, arriving in London in five days and a half (barring accidents). Time was, in the history of this church, when, despite its plainness, it could "boast in its congregation more beauty and fashion than many highly-ornamented churches;" but, as it has increased in decorative beauty, its worshippers have decreased in show of fashion, though it is still frequented by what may be called genteel people. On the occasion of our morning visit we remarked that, though the congregation was not small, a great portion of the pews in the galleries, and many seats below, were filled up with the children of the school. The decrease in fashion is accounted for by outside changes, whereby the village of Ardwick has been transformed into a populous suburb of the city. Traces of former splendour remain in its decayed houses of style, and in the old-fashioned residents who still linger about it, like late departing guests. The cultivated fields have long since gone, and, though efforts are being made to retain a green spot in its centre, vegetation can scarcely be induced to live in an atmosphere laden with noxious gases from chemical and other manufactories.

The service is well rendered, and pleasantly intermixed with fair music from a good choir of white-robed choristers, assisted by an organ of powerful tone. The lessons were read by assistants in a rather monotonous and commonplace manner. The sermon was preached by the rector (the Rev. Joseph Nunn, M.A.), a gentleman of somewhat youthful appearance in the pulpit. He has a delicate, intellectual face, with broad, high forehead, expressive eyes, a firm, clear mouth, and a deep, rich voice, not without much pathos in it. The necessary brevity of the sermon, following a lengthened morning service, precluded the possibility of a fair estimate of his mental power. Moreover, the subject

was a doctrinal one touching the ordinance of Holy Communion, and dealing with technical matters regarding the propriety of administering the sacrament in the evening, a departure from the ordinary custom which the preacher upheld. Nevertheless the sharp, clear sentences, logical arguments, and repeated quotations from the Fathers of the Church, indicated something of a scholarly tone of mind. From his decided and strongly expressed views on the doctrine of Transubstantiation and the errors of the Church of Rome in that direction, together with the warm injunctions to his hearers to hold fast by the teaching of the Protestant Church in the exact form of words as well as spirit, we should conclude that he has a suspicious dread of all innovation, and is inclined to stick to the hard and fast line of orthodoxy represented by what, we suppose, in the present confusion of terms, is called the Prayer Book party. This, however, is only a guess on our part.

Mr. Nunn, in addition to his clerical duties, takes considerable interest in the progress of secular education in this city. He is specially great on the statistics of education, and during the early days of the Education Aid Society waged vigorous war with the late Mr. Brotherton, and subsequently with Mr. Bremner and Mr. Mayson, on the subject of the society's figures, facts, and arguments. In fact, we fear he made himself somewhat of a bore; otherwise, why did the much-enduring editor of the *Courier* feel constrained to close the letter-column of his omnivorous journal against the inroads of the everlasting Mr. Nunn? By the way, an incident in connection with St. Thomas's Church will serve to show the state of education in Ardwick something less than sixty years ago. In a report on education rendred about that time, we learn that, in addition to the grant of land for the church, Samuel Birch, Esquire, left a sum of £200, the interest of which should be devoted to the teaching of poor children in the parish. The disposal of this sum, which amounted to £8 annually, was placed in the hands of trustees, who appear to have neglected their duty and left it to the clerk of the church. This worthy individual having received this annual sum, and having collected the pew rents of the church, absconded one fine day. The report says the trustees, being in entire ignorance of how the money was invested, the interest and principal were lost, and, consequently, the school at that time was in a very poor condition. Whether anything has been heard of it since we do not know.

CAROLS OF COCKAYNE.

MOST over-laden of all the over-laden articles of furniture in an English house, is the drawing-room table. It is almost impossible to enumerate the various burdens which this much-enduring piece of carpentery has to bear. It is equally difficult to over-estimate the amount of suffering which it is put to, for the articles are, with few exceptions, heavy in the extreme. In the middle, there is the inevitable case of wax flowers; dotted round it, at intervals, are the three omnipresent albums. At one end is the card-basket; carelessly thrown on the top of which is the paste-board of the Dowager Lady Dundizzy, who, by a strange fatality, always seems to have been the last caller at the houses she frequents. Filling up interstices, are a variety of knick-knacks; but the staple articles are always books. This is perfectly proper, and a graceful tribute to literature—or, rather, to the book-binder; but it is the want of taste in the selection of these articles that we have to complain of. A drawing-room is not a study. It is a place into which callers are shown, where the company assemble before dinner, to which the ladies retire after dinner, and where the gentlemen rejoin them. It is essentially a room to wait in and to talk in. It is, therefore, a place where one is liable to interruption at any moment. In consequence, while it should be plentifully provided with the means of temporary amusement, it ought not to be filled, or even more than dotted, with substantiality of any sort. In this selection of most of the drawing-room table's incumbrances, this idea is pretty carefully kept in view. The articles are mostly such as are not likely to detain one's attention for any great length of time. The wax flowers under the glass-shade are not calculated to occupy one longer than is taken by the act of removing one's eyes from them; the inventor of the photographic album is as great a benefactor of his kind as the inventor of the weather; the originator of the autographic album is the blessing of nonentities as much as he is the bane of celebrities; and even the card-basket is a source of considerable furtive amusement; but the books are an abomination. It is all very well for the owner of a drawing-room table to feel himself bound to buy that volume of poetry which his wife's second cousin has published—at his own expense—yet he ought to remember that his friends do not go to his house to be martyrized, but to spend a pleasant evening, and he really should consign his wife's second cousin's *Something-and-other-Poems* to that dark and dusky shelf in the top attic, where Goody's *Sunday Meditations* and *Dr. Dozey's Sermons* languish in congenial obscurity. Again: Master Tommy's numerous prizes—all for writing—N.B. At the school which Master Tommy goes to, every boy gets a prize, and that for writing is the lowest one given—may be very gratifying to the parental feelings, and, certainly, are gorgeously bound; but, internally, they are eminently uninteresting. As Master Tommy's schoolmaster used to contract with his bookseller for the large quantities of calf and gilt he annually sent to the delighted parents of each one of his dull charges, that keen tradesman was too shrewd a man of business to lose so fine an opportunity of clearing off old stock, and the consequence is that, when you take up an elegant-looking volume from the table of Master Tommy's proud, progenitors, your expectations of finding something light and toothsome are dashedto the ground by the discovery that you are in the very midst of Barker's *Lares and Penates*, or some other duffer's *History of the Affghans*. We are about to earn the gratitude of our readers by introducing to their notice a book which, we hope, they will all of them put upon their drawing-room tables, in the place of one, at least, of Master Tommy's prizes.

A short time ago we recommended to them a little volume then about to be produced, and now obtainable, namely, the *Bab Ballads* of Mr. W. S. Gilbert. A companion-book to those *Bab Ballads* is the one which we now offer to their notice—Mr. Henry S. Leigh's *Carols of Cockayne*. Those of the readers of the magazines who care to look by whom their entertainment is provided, will be familiar with the name of Mr. Leigh. They will have observed that, whenever they have come across any unusually musical and entertaining "verses of society," the name affixed to them has generally been that of "Henry S. Leigh." Verses of society, as the songs of such a muse as Mr. Leigh's are called, are not the highest form of literature; but we don't want always to be reading *Ecce Homines* or *Paradise Lost*. Good sense is not more necessary to a healthy literary appetite than good nonsense; and in Mr. Leigh's book will be found not only plenty of the very best nonsense, but a fair amount of ballast in the shape of light and easy sense. Mr. Leigh is about the most tripping and graceful of recent rhymsters. In his brief preface he modestly disclaims all competition with such versifiers-of-society as Hood, and Praed, and Locker; but we are inclined to think that his lines bowl along even more smoothly than those of the masters of his craft; and while he, perhaps, must yield the palm to them in respect of originality, he sometimes carries it away from them on the easy roll of his rhymed periods. In elegant comicality his stanzas cannot be excelled; they are invariably lucid—a rare virtue—and such a thing as a false rhyme would set his teeth on edge. But, undoubtedly, their chief attraction lies in the melodious way in which they trip along. They might be sung by silver bells upon the heels of Puck, putting a girdle round the earth in forty minutes. They undulate along like Venus at a trot.

We should also recommend these pretty little poems to the comic singer of the period. We are sick unto death of the vulgar balderdash of the music-halls; and there is no reason why the young men with the tremendous voices, who now electrify drawing-room audiences by yelling "Tommy Dodd," should not devote a portion of their powers of making a noise—please, not all—to the rehearsal of some of Mr. Leigh's pieces. One or two of them have already had music set to them, and published. We are sorry to advise the murder of these verses, but songs have more lives than a cat, and survive the most barbarous treatment. Mr. Leigh's would possess three advantages over those of the music-halls,—they would be melodious, comical, and tasteful.

Altogether, though we do not suppose that this pretty volume will materially alter the destinies of England, it will exert a healthful influence in its own little way. Than bad fun few things are more revolting, and we get it to repletion; but good fun is a wholesome thing, and Mr. Leigh's is of the best. His book is one which can be opened and closed at any place; while whoever takes it up may be sure of at least one good laugh for every page turned over in the interval.

PICTURES FOR THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE next exhibition of the Royal Academy will be held in the new building at Burlington House. Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Ward will exhibit. The first will have the Introduction at Court of Grinling Gibbons, the wonderful woodcarver whom Sir Christopher Wren brought from the Netherlands, in order to do the stall work at St. Paul's. Mr. Ward's other picture will be "Luther First Studying the Bible." Mrs. Ward's subject is "An Incident in the Life of the First Pretender." Mr. Pettie has selected "The Fall of Wolsey." Mr. Calderon has two pictures—one has for title the first line of Marlowe's well-known song, "Come live with me and be my love," and represents two figures in fifteenth-century costume. The other represents an incident in French history—the widow of the Duke of Guise persuading Clement to murder Henry III. Mr. Armitage has a scriptural subject, and a picture of Hero and Leander. Mr. Leslie has two pictures—one a single female figure reclining in an arbour; the other founded on the old song, "It's best to be off with the old love before you're on with the new"—a girl standing with her recreant lover's portrait in her drooping hand, while her mother is reading the letter in which the rupture of the tie is announced. Mr. Marks has a large picture, "The Minstrel's Gallery," a major-domo of the middle ages shewing a number of minstrels to the gallery whence they are to enliven a festival which is being carried on below. Mr. Mason, whose "Evening Hymn" was the gem of last year's Academy and last year's Royal Institution Exhibition, and won for him the large number of forty votes at the late ballot for two associates, has two pictures, one a rustic party taking refuge under a tree during a hail-storm, and the other an evening on a moor, with the bright light of the sunset reflected on a stream. Mr. Watts has on hand several pictures, among which are "Diana and Endymion;" a single figure, larger than life, of Hyperion sitting on the clouds just ere the sun breaks forth upon the night; "Una and the Red Cross Knight," the first riding on her lowly ass, and the knight on his war steed; also, a portrait of a lady. Mr. Watts will probably send these, and perhaps more, to the Royal Academy Exhibition.

WINE versus BEER OR SPIRITS.

AN American journal brings together a lot of facts and arguments to prove that the growth of wine-drinking, and the diminution of beer, or brandy, or rum-drinking, would largely aid the cause of moderation and temperance. The same view has been taken by Dr. Druitt and other medical and scientific men in this country, who have made the subject their special study. Our American contemporary says:—

The Rev. Mr. Spurgeon drinks wine. The Rev. Dr. Bellows sees virtue in the vine. Massachusetts abandons her License law as a failure, and reverts, in despair, to the Prohibitive system, whose great defects she has already proven. Maine finds total abstinence from alcoholic stimulants leading to the excessive use of opium. It is in dorfo that in the Northern rum-drinking and beer-swilling countries dypsomania is painfully on the increase; while in the Southern vine lands, where everybody drinks, there is no drunkenness. Altogether, it is clearly evident that the coming man will drink wine. At least he ought to do so, as a practical temperance measure. People are beginning to think of regulating this evil which they cannot crush out; and practical, as well as philosophical, persons are looking to grape-culture and the cheapening of good wines as the best means of checking the increase, if not of entirely eradicating the evil.

The statistics of drunkenness show a fearful increase of the habit, significantly enough, wholly in the Northern climates. The English courts have tried 190,640 persons arrested for drunkenness annually for the last five years, againgst less than two-thirds of those numbers for the five years next preceding. In Russia the licensed drinking-houses have increased from 460 to 2,500 in six years; and though among the wealthy and aristocratic classes drunkenness has decreased, in consequence of its having become unfashionable, the poorer classes have taken to hard drinking at a fearful rate. Fifteen hundred millions of dollars—more than half our national debt—are spent annually in this country for liquors of the very worst kind; and it appears that New York City is the only one in the country which can show a decrease in the number of drinking-houses—2,419 having been abolished by the present Excise Board in three years. During the same time the liquor-shops of Boston have increased in number, from 1,900 to 2,500, under a similar law, differently administered. In short, the temperance movement appears to be a success only in the wine-growing countries, where everybody drinks the pure juice of the grape, diluted with water.

The evidence of all this is not new, but the fact has lately been brought more prominently to notice by inquiries into the subject by distinguished writers and foreign Government agents. Dr. Draper's theory of climatic influences appears to be a decided success as far as the use of stimulating drinks is concerned. Dr. Bellows, when in Europe lately, made it his special business to diligently seek for drunkards "in the places where, in our country, they would be found," and he has left some curious records of his experience in his "Old World in its New Face." "In the heart of the beer country of Germany" he finds that "many of the people are kept heavy and poor" by the use of this beverage—(beer). In Berlin he records that the "consumption of both whisky and beer is on the increase, and beer is used to a stupefying degree, I was somewhat horrified to find." He also says, "in common use among field labourers, both women and men, in certain districts aside from the Rhine (the wine-growing district of Germany), a fiery alcoholic drink called potato-whisky, strong, intoxicating, and full of fussel oil."

But of the wine-growing countries his evidence is very different and far more encouraging. "It is much to be regretted," he says, "that the friends of temperance have of late been trying to unsettle the opinion that drunkenness is rare in the vine-growing countries. It is so patent in France and in Germany (it is Rhineland he refers to here), that intemperance in the form of drunkenness is a most exceptional vice, that only wilful blindness or partisanship could deny it. I do not recollect to have seen one tipsy man since I left Paris, and only one in Paris, and I have diligently sought the places where, in our country, they would be found. The truth is, wine is one of the most common and one of the most beautiful gifts of Providence—an article joined with corn in the praises of the saints. The countries which possess it understand its use, and are just as little subject to excess in using wine as in using corn."

But it appears from late statistics of the French Government, collected by the French academicians, that the greatest intemperance is displayed less in the use of intoxicating drinks than in the abuse of intoxicating drugs. Every nation in existence appears to have its special and peculiar drug for purposes of intoxication. There is the fungus in Siberia and Northern Asia, and 40,000,000 get drunk upon it; ten times that number eat and smoke opium in Southern Asia; in Persia, India, Turkey, all Africa, and on the east coast of South America, the use and abuse of hasheesh is common among three hundred millions of people; the people of the west coast of South America, to the number of ten millions, abuse their cocoa; one hundred millions of those in the Pacific islands, Eastern Archipelago, and Southern Asia misapply their betel pepper; and nine hundred millions of Americans, Europeans, Asiatics, and Africans, get intoxicated on tobacco. It is noticeable, in the opinion of the French *savants*, that the most disgusting of these drugs, tobacco, has the grratest number of willing victims, and that cocoa, which has the most virtues and fewest evil effects, has the smallest number of admirers; while the most pernicious, opium, dulls the senses and destroys the health of the next greatest number of patrons. It is a fact which the French *savants* do not call attention to, that this latter drug, opium, is coming to be most extensively used in this country, particularly where the use of alcoholic stimulants has been prohibited, as, for instance, in Maine; while so great has been the increase in its consumption elsewhere that an effort is now making in this State to establish a hospital for the cure and reformation of unfortunates addicted to the opium habit.

We cannot better or more briefly point our moral than to again quote Dr. Bellows, choosing a passage of great practical sense and appropriateness to the present condition of the temperance movement. "I wish," he says, "we could manage to fight intemperance with some other weapons than direct prohibition. It is not the radical cure, and will necessarily have dangerous reactions."

AN ACTRESS ON THE STAGE AS IT IS.—Mrs. Stirling, the accomplished actress, responded to the toast of "the ladies" at the annual dinner of the Dramatic and Musical Sick Fund Society a few days ago. In the course of her speech she said:—Let me venture a few words on a subject that has occupied the attention of most of us for the last few days—I mean the Lord Chamberlain's—(loud laughter)—missive to the managers touching certain shortcomings on their parts—(continued laughter)—I beg pardon, in the parts of their ballet draperies. If I had the office of Lady Chamberlain, what sort of a letter should I issue to the managers? I don't think scanty petticoats would be my text. (Hear, hear.) I only wish the plays we have to act were always as satisfactory as the dresses they are acted in, and that the worst offences against good taste on the stage were to be looked for in the costumes of the *corps de ballet*. (Hear, hear.) I should first suggest to managers to cater for the higher instead of the lower tastes of the public, and to see whether there is not a large class that might be drawn to the theatre by a better style of entertainment. (Cheers.) To some authors I would say, if we are to have burlesque, let it be of the humour that we remember of old, and be made up of better materials than nigger melodies, breakdowns, and wire-drawn puns. I would advise the more serious dramatists to be realistic in higher matters than hansom cabs and practicable pumps, and to give us characters and incidents as like the truth as the painted scenes before which they are played. (Hear, hear.) To us actors and actresses I would say—

Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as others see us!

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TO PYRRHA.

ON THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

(Paraphrase of Horace, Book 1., *Ode* 5.)

What sage professor, Pyrrha, let me ask,
Woos thee to science with such tender care?
For whom do you, low bending o'er your task,
Push back that charming wealth of golden hair?

How oft will he your pretty face deplore,
Who sees you earnest o'er the lesson-book,
And finds, that ere the pleasant work is o'er,
On some new teacher you have learnt to look.

Unhappy he, who fancies when you know
All 'ologies, that steadfast you will prove;
For my part, I have learnt, Dear, long ago,
To teach you but to conjugate—I love.

H. Savile Clarke in the Public Schools' Chronicle.

A PARSON ON THE THEATRE.

IN the course of a lecture on "Rational Amusements," recently delivered in New York, by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, the theatre was referred to. Was it in any important sense an instructor? asked Mr. Beecher. Was it an educator of taste? Was it promotive of good morals? Was it an important element of public amusement? He wished not to attack or defend the theatre on moral respects. Assuming it not to be bad, and the profession more respectable, he only inquired whether it served any considerable purpose of amusement and pleasurable instruction. In their nature they reached but a small class of society. Theatres were at best but the occasional amusement of classes in a city, and to strangers resorting there. They could not be provided for the people. They were too enormously expensive. It required an income to sustain a theatre that would support twenty clubs, societies, and lecturers. They furnished only a limited amusement, and they were, for the most part, of the lowest kind of amusements, namely, "pastimes." He thought, therefore, that the exaggerated claims for theatrical entertainments could not be sustained. Once or twice in a lifetime the actor gave the cultivated a higher conception of Shapespere; but how often did the cultivated obtain more by reading. He might be asked whether he read Shakespere; and if so, why not see him represented; why not hear him recited? And he answered, because he was so much better in the reading than in the representations on the stage. Some of the most remarkable portions of Shakspere were spoiled upon the stage. What harrowing scenes could be conjured up in the reading of the witches' scene in *Macbeth?* What was more ridiculous than the witches on the stage? To the second and third-rate dramas produced at the theatres he had far less objection. The moral and mirthful dramas, he thought, were the theatres' strong point. They produced laughter, and that was the strength of the theatre; but they were good for nothing else. Theatres had not been able to sustain the drama. *Hamlet* was produced, perhaps, ten times in the year, while *Humpty Dumpty* has had 300 nights of it. The *White Fawn* triumphed for a season, while *King Lear* stood out in the cold. The theory of theatres was all well enough—facts were the only things against them. The high drama could not be supported now; and so the theatre was obliged to resort to the others in order to secure profits. Even in Paris the drama could not be sustained unless assisted by the Government. It was urged by eminent men, like Dr. Bellows, that if Christian men took the matter in hand, encouraged good dramas, and frowned on bad ones, the theatre might be redeemed. His theory, however, was to have no amusement that must first go into qurantine to cover up its beggarly defects. The theatre gathered about it evil associations. Facts showed that it demoralised, and that was enough. On the whole, he considered the theatre a failure—not, perhaps, so bad as many represented, but certainly not so good as those who advocated its claims alleged.

NOTES FOR OBSERVATIONS OF NATURE FOR FEBRUARY.—The rooks begin in this month to assemble and to visit their old nesting places, as if to decide upon the particular branches which are to be occupied by the young and inexperienced birds. Long are their deliberations, and loud are their discussions. After the first few pioneers have come and looked at the nests and gone back again, the rooks assemble in great force. For a time the trees are filled with their busy forms as they shift about from branch to branch, now rising on the wing for a few yards, and now settling in some other spot. The air resounds with their cawings, which seem to be actuated by some orderly arrangement, at one minute bursting out into a full chorus, and at another sinking away so as to allow one speaker to have his say. Suddenly they seem to have decided the disputed point; they rise simultaneously on the wing, they circle around once or twice, ascend high into the air, and then disperse, returning in due course of time, when the business of nest building commences. Insects are yet but few. On a more than usually bright day, our eyes may possibly be gladdened by the sight of the beautiful brimstone butterfly, with its soft, golden wings set off by the well-known crimson spot; and even one of the many-coloured tortoiseshells will occasionally come flapping along, its torn and ragged wings showing that it has survived the winter months, and its rich colours sadly smeared and faded. Gnats, too, take every opportunity of bursting from their watery imprisonment, and their merry hum is often heard in the coppice as they dance up and down in living clouds beneath the leafless branches that stretch over the pool. Should the weather be extremely mild, a stray wasp may be seen on the sunny banks, peering intently into every crevice, and wearing a hurried and anxious mien. This is the future mother of a thousand young, who has come out to select a spot for her nest, so that those who value their autumn fruit will do well to kill the queen wasps in the spring. Vegetation is nearly the same as in January, except that the trees are beginning to lose their hard, sharply-cut outlines, and look a little more hazy as the buds swell on the many branchlets. The snowdrop and the crocus are now in blossom, and in the open field we trace at least the delicate pink and white flowers of the two species of dead-nettle, a familiar plant, whose beauty seems to be scarcely appreciated as it deserves. There is, of course, the glorious furze, with its heavy masses of golden flowers laden with their peculiar perfume like that of freshly broken cocoanuts; and in many a sheltered spot the hardy dandelion spreads its radiating flowers to the sun. Somewhere about the end of the month the primrose ventures to put forth its delicate petals, provided that its retreat be not assailed by bleak northern winds; and the butcher's broom, in very favourable seasons, may be found in flower on the heath and wooded spots in which it most delights. The various foxtail grasses are still to be seen in ditches and marshy shallows, though their odd flowers will not be put forth until June or July.—*Rev. J. G. Wood.*

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications for the Editor should be addressed to the *Sphinx* Office, 14, Market Place, Manchester. Every manuscript should bear the name and address of the sender. All contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage. No replies or MSS. can be delivered on personal application.

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ESTABLISHED 1848.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—GREAT SALE AT THE GREAT OUTFIT ESTABLISHMENT,

125 & 127, OLDHAM STREET.

THOMAS PEEL

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GREAT SALE WILL BE CONTINUED DAILY, UNTIL SATURDAY, 27TH INST.,

COMMENCING AT TEN A.M.

The present premises having become too small for a fast and largely increasing trade, T. P. intends to make extensive alterations in February, to facilitate which he intends placing his beautiful Stock, which for magnitude stands unapproachable, at such prices that will be remarkable. Every article will have its original mark (which is always in plain figures) as well as the reduced price, which will be in red ink, which it is hoped will facilitate sales.

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40 Pieces	ditto	6½d.
40 Pieces	ditto	8½d.
10 Pieces	ditto	1s.
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10 Pieces	ditto	1s. 6d.
10 Pieces	ditto	1s. 10d.
15 Pieces	ditto, various, to	3s.
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10 Pieces	ditto	5½d.
10 Pieces	ditto	7½d.
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And so on to	9s.	,,

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Sewed Edgings, Scollops, and Insertions, amounting to upwards of £2,000.

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General Damas..... Mr. F. B. Egan.
Pauline..... Miss Helen Beaufort.
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Hamlet..... Mr. J. P. Weston.
Ghost..... Mr. F. B. Egan.
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First Grave Digger..... Mr. Frank Emery.
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